



METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

"Planning the Future - Respecting the Past"

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: June 11, 2024
TO: THE MAYOR AND ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH
FROM: METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
SUBJECT: Map and Master Plan Amendment

PETITION REFERENCED:

Petitioner: Harold Yellin

Property Owner: Gladys Hill and Joyce Durrence

Address: 0 Fort Argyle

Alderman: District - 5 – Dr Estella Shabazz

County Commission: District - 6– Aaron "Adot" Whitely

Property Identification Number: 21034 01008

Petition File No.: 24-002471-ZA

MPC ACTION:

The Planning Commission recommends **approval** of the request to amend the master plan to include RMF-2 use contingent upon the following conditions. 1) The GDP submitted and reviewed in association with this petition shall supersede all previous submissions as the current approved master plan for the totality of the Hill-Durrence Tract. 2) Buffer encroachment remediation shall be installed as indicated on the revised master plan for Lots 1, 2 and 3. 3) Where land is disturbed, a Type D Buffer shall be installed along the portion of the property line of the northern commercial pod that adjoins I-L zoning.

MPC STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The MPC Staff recommends **approval** of the request to amend the master plan to include RMF-2 use contingent upon the following conditions. 1) The GDP submitted and reviewed in association with this petition shall supersede all previous submissions as the current approved master plan for the totality of the Hill-Durrence Tract. 2) Buffer encroachment remediation shall be installed as indicated on the revised master plan for Lots 1, 2 and 3. 3) Where land is disturbed, a Type D Buffer shall be installed along the portion of the property line of the northern commercial pod that adjoins I-L zoning.

MEMBERS PRESENT: 12

Traci Amick	Jeff Notrica
Stephen Plunk	Joseph Welch
Travis Coles- Vice Chair	Tom Woiwode
Karen Jarrett – Chairwoman	Michael Kaigler
Laureen Boles	Dwayne Stephens
Wayne Noha	
Joseph Ervin	

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE: Approve Staff Recommendation with conditions.
(10-1)

APPROVAL Votes: 12	DENIAL Votes:	ABSENT
Amick Coles Stephens Notrica Plunk Welch Noha Ervin Jarrett Kaigler Woiwode Boles		Melder Ross



Respectfully submitted,



Melanie Wilson
Executive Director and CEO

MW/sh

Enclosure

cc Mark Massey, Clerk of Council
Lester B. Johnson, Assistant City Attorney
Jennifer Herman, Assistant City Attorney
Bridget Lidy, Planning and Urban Design



C H A T H A M C O U N T Y - S A V A N N A H
METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION

Planning the Future - Respecting the Past

To: The City Council

From: The Planning Commission

Date: June 11, 2024

Subject: Zoning Map Amendment with Amendment of Adopted Master Plan

Agent: Harold Yellin

Address: 0 Fort Argyle

PIN: 21034 01008

Site Area: 320.39 acres

Aldermanic District: 5 – Dr. Estella Shabazz

Chatham County Commission District: 6 – Aaron ‘Adot’ Whitely

File Number: 24-002471-ZA

Neighborhood/Subdivision: Gateway West

Current Zoning District: Community Business, Light Industrial-Transition,
Light Industrial

Future Land Use (FLU) Category: Planned Development

Request:

The Petitioner seeks to establish multi-family residential use (RMF-2) within a 33.8 ac portion of a previously approved master planned development where Community Business use was originally intended. The request also includes minor amendments to portions of the previously adopted master plan designated for Light Industrial use. (Exhibit 1)

With the proposed update, the existing B-C portion of the development will be revised to reflect 1) a north commercial pod consisting of approximately 23.2 upland acres with 360 apartments and future commercial/retail uses, and 2) a south commercial pod consisting of approximately 14.3 upland acres.

Facts and Findings:

Public Notice: As required by the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance, all property owners within 300 feet of the subject property were sent notices of the proposed rezoning. Public notice was also posted on site and published in Savannah Morning News at least 15 days in advance of the public hearing.

Neighborhood meeting: The public hearing was continued from its original agenda date of May 21, 2024 to permit a community meeting to be held prior to the public hearing as required by the Zoning Ordinance. The community meeting was held on the evening of June 6, 2024 at L Scott Stell Park.

Background: The Hill-Durrence Tract development was initially rezoned June 23, 2022 with a condition that a Master Plan would be brought back to the Metropolitan Planning Commission prior to the approval of a Site Development Plan. The original plan (Exhibit 2) contained a mix of warehouse developments (I-L-T 393,000-sqft and I-L 2,093,410-sqft) and Community Business dedicated for development as an Indoor/Outdoor Sports Complex (Indoor Ice Hockey 100,000-sqft, Indoor Soccer 62,000-sqft, and 6 Adult/Youth Outdoor Soccer Fields). Ultimately, development plans for the Indoor Hockey Arena changed with the intended tenant thus changing the developer’s plans for the whole sports complex. In the interim, development on the rear industrial parcels has continued largely as planned with only minor changes in the size and orientation of the warehouses resulting in an overall increase of ~ 37,864-sqft in proposed warehouse storage.

Existing Development Pattern: The land uses and zoning districts surrounding the subject property include:

<u>Direction</u>	<u>Land Use</u>	<u>Zoning Designation</u>
North	Warehouses	Light Industrial
East	Warehouses	Light Industrial-Transition
South	Residential/Creekfire RV Park	Residential-Agriculture
West	Residential/Creekfire RV Park	Agriculture

Existing B-C Zoning District:

- a. **Intent of the B-C District:** The B-C district is established to accommodate a range of nonresidential uses that serve a community-wide market area and upper story residences. Uses in this district are intended to be located primarily on collector or arterial streets.
- b. **Allowed Uses:** For a full list of permissible uses please refer to [Sec. 5.4. Principal Use Table](#) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance.
- c. **Development Standards:** The development standards for the B-C district have been appended to the end of this report.

Proposed RMF-2 Zoning District:

- a. Intent of the RMF- District: The Residential Multi-family (“RMF-”) districts are established to allow multi-family development in addition to other types of residential development. The districts (RMF-1, RMF-2 and RMF-3) within the RMF- designation provide for varying development standards and generally the same uses with a few exceptions. The specific density (a whole number) shall be established at the time of rezoning. Such density shall be represented as a numeric suffix after the zoning district (e.g. RMF-3-14). With the exception of RMF-1, the RMF- districts are intended to be placed on higher classifications of streets and in close proximity to mass transit corridors, retail services and employment opportunities. The RMF-3 district is intended to be used primarily for institutional residential uses. A limited number of nonresidential uses are allowed that are harmonious with multi-family residential areas.
- b. Allowed Uses: The RMF-2 district permits all standard forms of residential use ranging from detached single-family up to apartments. The district also permits a number of appropriate nonresidential uses that are desirable and appropriate in close proximity to residential uses. For a full list of permissible uses please refer to [Sec. 5.4. Principal Use Table](#) of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance.
- c. Development Standards: The development standards for the RMF-2 district have been appended to the end of this report.

Impact and Suitability:

1. Transportation Network and Transit: While the bulk of the development is served by a central spine road, the newly proposed apartments will have separate access off of Fort Argyle. This is likely to be shared with future north commercial pod development. Design of a second access that may exclusively facilitate the Fire Department’s access to the site is still under review with Traffic Engineering.

Preliminary 2050 MTP LOS data rates Fort Argyle Road’s level of service within this segment at level ‘D’ where LOS ‘A’ represents the highest rating and ‘F’ the lowest. Level of Service D is characterized by 1) high traffic volumes, 2) reduced speed and freedom to maneuver, 3) frequent stops and starts, and 4) increased potential for traffic delays.

The nearest Chatham Area Transit line and stops are just over 1.3 miles away on the east side of intersection of SR 204 (Abercorn Extension) and I-95.

2. Public Services and Facilities: The site has access to the City’s public water, sewer, and stormwater systems.
3. Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element: The subject property is within the ‘Suburban Residential’ area as identified by the [Land Use Element](#) within Plan 2040 (p. 172-173). Suburban Residential character areas include low and medium density developments; generally, this character area features either single-family structures on large lots or medium-lot residential subdivisions with relatively uniform housing types and densities. However, multi-family apartments and attached single-family residential subdivisions are

also prevalent in this area. Local streets are laid out in curvilinear patterns, with occasional cul-de-sacs and limited sidewalks. Suburban Residential areas adjacent to Suburban Commercial character areas should, to the extent possible, be designed as cohesive, connected neighborhoods. Alternative types of housing options should be encouraged in suburban areas to accommodate multi-generational households, seniors, and others.

The requested zoning map amendment could be consistent with Plan 2040 if the proposed density were reduced. The proposed zoning district and permitted housing types, however, are appropriate.

Zoning Ordinance Review

The following review criteria for rezoning are prescribed in the Savannah Zoning Ordinance Sec. 3.5.8

a. Suitability and Community Need

- i. Whether the range of uses permitted by the proposed zoning district is more suitable than the range of uses that are permitted by the current zoning district.

MPC Comment: The proposed inclusion of multi-family residential units likely represents a minor reduction in the intensity of the development than could be expected if developed under Community Business standards.

- ii. Whether the proposed zoning district addresses a specific need in the county or city.

MPC Comment: The proposed use can be expected to fill a need for additional residential units in the County. The proximity of the site to major thoroughfares like SR 204 and I-95 makes it ideal for those working in West Chatham or with a short commute to Effingham or Bryan Counties.

b. Compatibility

- i. Whether the zoning proposal will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby property.

MPC Comment: Given the relatively rural nature of the area, any development is likely to change the overall character of life for residents adjoining the site and in the general vicinity. The subject parcel is already proposed as part of a large development that includes commercial and industrial uses that increase in intensity as one travels deeper into the site's central spine road. Community business is an expansive zoning district that permits uses as intense and varied as restaurants, hotels, indoor amusements and retail. Relative to the current use designation, apartments may prove less intrusive than an equivalent square footage of retail or other business-like use.

- ii. Whether the zoning proposal is compatible with the present zoning pattern and conforming uses of nearby property and the character of the surrounding area.

MPC Comment: The existing pattern of development and character is largely rural residential in nature with an increasingly uncoordinated mixture of single-family

detached, industrial and commercial uses. The Comprehensive Plan indicates that the area will develop in a more suburban fashion. The proposed rezoning is consistent with the general expansion of a sprawling, conventional suburban pattern of development.

- iii. Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the zoning proposal.

MPC Comment: The amendment to the master plan and introduction of a new land use was largely precipitated by the failure of the previously planned sports complex to come to fruition. Consideration of the appropriateness of an alternative use is warranted under the circumstances. Scale and intensity should be contingent upon and limited by the ability of the proposed use to meet all associated development standards.

c. Consistency

Whether the zoning proposal is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans, such as a redevelopment plan or small area plan.

MPC Comment: The Chatham County-Savannah Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map (FLUM) designates the subject property as 'Planned Development.' The Plan describes these character areas as master planned areas accommodating cluster development, neo-traditional development, or mixed residential, commercial, or civic uses. Such developments are characterized by internal or external linkages among residential, commercial, institutional, or recreational use components. This category includes Amenity Communities, Village Centers, Town Centers, and existing PUDs.

The proposal meets the intent of the FLUM in that is guided by an adopted master plan (GDP) with clearly designated land use areas that are individually governed by the development standards of New ZO.

d. Reasonable Use

Whether the property to be affected by the zoning proposal has a reasonable use as currently zoned.

MPC Comment: The subject property does have reasonable use as currently zoned.

e. Adequate Public Services

Whether adequate public safety and emergency facilities, road, ingress and egress, parks, wastewater treatment, water supply and stormwater drainage facilities are available for the uses and densities that are permitted in the proposed zoning district.

MPC Comment: The requested map amendment will have varied impacts to community facilities than the previous proposal. The scale and intensity of the residential development, if approved, will ultimately be contingent upon and limited by the ability of the proposed use to meet all associated development standards.

f. Proximity to a Military Base, Installation or Airport

MPC Comment: The subject parcel is not within proximity of an airport or military installation.

Recommendation

Based upon findings and evaluation The Planning Commission recommends approval of the request to amend the master plan to include RMF-2 use contingent upon the following conditions.

1. The GDP submitted and reviewed in association with this petition shall supersede all previous submissions as the current approved master plan for the totality of the Hill-Durrence Tract.
2. Buffer encroachment remediation shall be installed as indicated on the revised master plan for Lots 1, 2 and 3.
3. Where land is disturbed, a Type D Buffer shall be installed along the portion of the property line of the northern commercial pod that adjoins I-L zoning.

B-C Development Standards (Current Zoning District)

5.16.6 Development Standards for Permitted Nonresidential Uses

Nonresidential uses in any B- district shall meet the development standards as set forth below.

5.16.6 Development Standards for Permitted Nonresidential Uses				
Standards	B-L	B-N	B-C	B-M
Lot Dimensions (min)				
Lot width (ft)	--	--	--	--
Lot area per unit for Upper Story				
Residential use (sq ft)	2,170	1,815	1,815	--
Lot area (sq ft)	--	--	--	--
Building (max)				
Building Coverage	--	--	--	--
Height (ft)	36	40	75 [1]	36
Ground floor area (sq ft)	10,000	50,000	--	--
Building Setback (min ft)				
Front yard	15	15	15	15
Side (street) yard	15	15	15	15
Side (interior) yard	--	--	--	--
Rear yard	--	--	--	--
Rear Yard (adjacent to street/lane)	15	15	15	15
From access easement	5	5	5	5
Building separation	See Fire Code	See Fire Code	See Fire Code	See Fire Code
Accessory Structure Setback	See Sec. 8.7	See Sec. 8.7	See Sec. 8.7	See Sec. 8.7
Parking Area Setback (min ft)				
From collector and arterial street rights-of-way	15	15	15	15
From local street rights-of-way	10	10	10	10
Abutting lane or access easement	5	5	5	5

[1] Buildings proposed within 50 feet of a Residential zoning district shall be subject to the height restrictions established in such Residential zoning district and then may increase in height one (2) foot for every one (1) foot of distance from the Residential zoning district. For example, the portion of the building that is 65 feet from a Residential zoning district with a 36-foot height limit cannot exceed 51 feet in height.

RMF Development Standards (Proposed Zoning District)

5.10.5 Development Standards for Permitted Housing Types			
Standards	RMF-1	RMF-2	RMF-3
Site (min)			
Lot area per unit (sq ft) [1][2]			
Single-family detached	6,000	5,000	--
Single-family attached	3,600	3,300	2,400
Two-family	3,600	3,300	2,400
Townhouse/Stacked Townhouse	No min.	No min.	No min.
Three-Four Family/Apartment	--	No min.	No min.
Lot Dimensions [1]			
Lot width per unit (min ft)			
Single-family detached	60	50	--
Single-family attached	36	33	24
Two-family	36	33	24
Townhouse unit width	20	20	20
Lot width (min ft)			
Three-Four Family	--	50	50
Apartment	--	55	55
Building Setbacks [2][3] (min ft)			
Street Access			
Front Yard			
Single-family detached	20	20	--
Single-family attached	20	20	20
Two-family	20	20	20
Townhouse/Stacked Townhouse	20	20	20
Three-Four Family	--	20	20
Apartment	--	25	25
Side (interior) Yard			
Single-family detached	5	5	--
Single-family attached	5	5	5
Two-family	5	5	5
Townhouse Inc. Stacked (end unit)	5	5	5
Three-Four Family	--	7	7
Apartment	--	10	10
Side (street) Yard			
Apartments	--	15	15
All other housing types	10	10	10
Rear Yard			
Single-family detached	20	20	20
All other housing types	25	25	25
From access easement	5	5	5
Lane Access			
Front Yard			
Apartment	--	20	20
All other housing types	15	15	15
Side (interior) Yard			
Side (street) Yard	5	5	5
From access easement	20	20	20
Rear Yard			
Rear Yard	5	5	5
Building separation			
Building separation	See Fire Code	See Fire Code	See Fire Code
Building Coverage (max)			
Street Access			
Single-family detached	40%	40%	--
All other housing types	50%	50%	50%
Lane Access			
Single-family detached	40%	45%	--
All other housing types	50%	50%	50%
Height (max ft) [4]			
Height (max ft) [4]	50	50	50
Accessory Structure Setback			
Accessory Structure Setback	See Sec. B.7	See Sec. B.7	See Sec. B.7
Parking Area Setback (min ft)			
(Apartments Only)			
From collector and arterial street rights-of-way	--	15	15
From local street rights-of-way	--	10	10
From lane, property line or access easement	--	5	5

1-13 Final Application